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DIMKA GUICHEVA-GOCHEVA

Legislation for Higher Education in Balkan Countries

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Legislating for Higher Education in some Balkan countries, By Dimka Guicheva-Gocheva,

Introduction

The desperate necessity of such legislative initiative

This undertaking is more than necessary. Moreover, it is of fatal importance for the future of Bulgaria. All of us are well acquainted with the dismay data for the demographic tendencies and the processes, evolving in the so-called “human capital” of Bulgaria. During the past 12-13 years enormous amount of compatriots with degrees from different academic specialities and specialized vocative high schools have left the country. One eighth of its population have emigrated. Several reports, issued by the World Bank experts estimate that 2/3 of all Bulgarians, who have possessed academic degrees now are outside the country. According to the sober prognoses, given the speed of these emigration and demographic tendencies, around 2050 the population of Bulgaria will be 2,5 times smaller than now, whereas countries like Britain and France (if the present tendencies continue to evolve) will be 2,5 times bigger.

Even more disturbing is the fact, that in Bulgaria, like in many other CEE countries the majority of the persons, who have graduated from universities, institutes and colleges, are in an “internal migration”. They have remained in the country, but they earn their living with jobs, which do not correspond to their qualification from the tertiary learning.

Therefore, the three draft proposals for a new Academic degrees and titles act are more than welcome. Sincerely speaking, however, they are coming even too late. That’s why the legislative efforts in this direction should be speeded and enforced. It is not an exaggeration to claim, that Bulgaria loses its human and academic potential. It is a question of an elementary policy consideration to admit, that the settlement of the problem “development of the academic potential” will be a favourable counter-balance against the present troubling tendencies.

The present legislative regulation and the fiasco of the alternative legislative proposals

The present Law for the scientific titles and scientific degrees is promoted in 1972 (published in Official Gazette in No 36 on the 9th of May 1972). It is nowadays more than inadequate. It does correspond neither to the actual social reality, nor to the strategic priorities for the development of the country. With such a legislative document it is not realistic to expect that the disastrous processes in the Bulgarian academic resources will be stopped.

To begin with, let’s mention again and again the shameful fact that in the present Law, there are juridical jewels as, for example:

Article 5 (1): The dissertation papers should be directed to the solving of scientific or applied scientific problems, connected with the socialist development of the country...

Article 16 (1): The habilitation papers () and the other researches and creative achievements, according to art. 10 and 15 should be directed to the solving of scientific or applied scientific problems, connected with the socialist development of the country...

If we ask what the real causes for the remainder of such phrases in the LSTSD despite the numerous corrections, deletions of texts and additions of new articles in the law, the frank answers will admit several reasons:

1. These phrases are not deleted, because if they had been deleted, it should become necessary

to insert other 'mission-statements', other 'purpose-definitions', answering to the question: "To what should be directed the Doctoral theses, the Professors' and the Dozents' habilitations, the researches and the scholarly studies, the artistic work in the academies for the arts?" The academic community in Bulgaria since the beginning of the transition period has not bothered itself with such and similar questions. It was, is and probably it will continue to be one of the most hectic politicized professional communities, which does not care at all for its immanent mission, for the task of its institutional building and for the necessity of its own reforming.

2. The educational legislation, its theory and history is a specific part in the juridical sciences. Probably, because of its peculiarity and limited sphere of application (compared with the scope of the practical relevance of the other branches of the juridical sciences), is not taught as an academic discipline anywhere. This makes the solution of these matters in a favourable way dependant on very rare (and very unlikely for Bulgaria) coincidence of good circumstances. In this connection I cannot uphold the bitter remark, that the profile of the academic-juridical community is reflected in the present LSTSD. The members of this community besides their academic work are engaged privately in all kind of advocates' and/or consultants' activities for private enterprises. The fruits of this prolonged neglect of the educational legislation and especially of the act, regulating the development of the academic potential and the academic resources of the country are to be seen.
3. The present Law and the collapse of some alternative initiatives, is the result of the extremely conservative (and sometimes hostile) attitude of the highest level of the academic community to all kinds of attempts to change the status quo. Even the most innocent steps in the direction of change are swept and the concrete remains. The highest officials in the most influential academic institutions, as the Presidium of the Bulgarian Academy for Sciences and the Academic Council of the Sofia University opposed in 2000 the most significant and the most radical legislative initiative – the draft proposal, submitted by Georgi Panev. They did it without any detailed motivation and proposing only one pseudo-argument from the instruments of the trickiest sophisms. Whatever change of the present regulation WILL lead to negative results in the future. This sophistical pseudo-argument – argumentum ex futuro - from a policy point of view is devastating, not to speak about its logical feebleness. It claims for hypothetical future threatens and loses, and at the same time it neglects the extremely unfavourable tendencies, that already evolve in the past dozen of years – the drastic reduction of the academic resources and the human potential of our country.

As only and solely explanation for these sad processes the academic nobility points out the low level of the salaries, the insufficient payment, the bad working conditions and lack of IT equipment. But isn't it imposing of the responsibilities of the universities as institutions on the parliament and the government (in all political configurations we have had so far in the transition period). The indulgent self-vindication, that the "state does not care at all for the education and the scientific researches" is always to the fore. It is true, that the salaries for the academic and the teachers' work are insufficient and that the part of the budget, allocated for the secondary and the tertiary education, and for the scientific work, is small. It is undeniable that the majority retired Bulgarian academics and scholars lead a miserable existence after decades of noble work. Their life now is not the deserved otium cum dignitate, which enjoy their colleagues in the more developed countries.

However, when all these sad and undeniable facts are inserted into the consideration of the educational-legislative initiatives, they are usually used as a trick for the changing of subject. This replaces entirely the topic of the debate. The aim of this changing of the subject is to keep the present status ad infinitum. In this respect the analogies with the efforts to reform the judiciary system are correct. It might be feared, that the fight against all substantial undertakings for the reforming and the

modernization of the academic legislation will even stronger, more illogical and ungrounded than the resistance, exercised by the defenders of the present-day judiciary system in Bulgaria.

The most important lessons from the developments so far and the consensus ideas in the experts' community

I have allowed myself to engage the attention of the possible readers of this paper with all these circumstances, because the success or the failure of all new legislative initiatives for an alteration of the procedure mechanisms for the promotions in academic collegium, will have to take them into consideration. If the legislator is bound to introduce really a modern, European and favourable academic legislation, which eventually to bring to an end the shameful Stalinist-socialist heritage, the legislator will have to take into account also the following:

1. The presence of two important players in the process of the academic reform, who have great media and symbolic influence and who occupy incompatible positions. On the one side stands the negative-conservative attitude of the academic notables, represented mainly by the Academic council of the SU and the Presidium of BAS. On the other side is the reformative experts' community, represented mainly by the Chair of the Rectors' council and eminent Bulgarian scholars – professors in sociology and philosophy of education, some of the former ministers and deputy ministers of education, and some individually working experts and persons, supported by influential NGO-s, engaged with projects for the development of the higher education.
2. In the discussions, which have continued already for 3 three years (since the beginning of 2000) the defenders of the status quo have not mentioned a single argument from the history of the university education at home and all over the world, and about the contemporary European and global tendencies, whereas the experts' community proposes this kind of arguments. For the time being in vain.
3. The experts community is lead by several common, consensus convictions:

In the first period of its existence (since the establishment of the High School and especially in the period 1904-1948) the Bulgarian higher education had had an indisputable European face with an Anglo-Saxon profile and with some traces of the German model of the professorship. What is called in the typologies “a university from the type, created by cardinal Newman”, had been the ideal of the academic collegium in our country. That's why the mandates of the chairs of the departments, of the deans of the faculties, and of the rector of the SU had lasted only for a year. The SU had adhered to the rotational principle: all habilitated persons had become in turn in every department; all departments in turn had delegated the dean for one year in each faculty; all faculties in turn had delegated the rector of the SU. The different faculties had had different rulebooks and different regulation – e.g. for the doctoral theses and the habilitation procedures. Since 1928 had existed only one degree – Doctor of the SU. That's why the SU had resembled very much to a federation of independent faculties, as the majority of the Anglo-American universities (but without a board of trustees). That's why in 1938, when the SU celebrated its 50-th anniversary, the Oxford university had sent to our university as presents the academic insignia (the rector's rod and the necklaces of the rector and members of the Academic council). These presents had been received not from elsewhere else but from the Oxford University, because in those days the Bulgarian higher education had been more autonomous, modern and dynamic than the education in other European countries.

The experts' community keeps on repeating again and again, that the present structures, which lead the procedures for the obtaining of the Doctors' degrees and the habilitation procedures, are

entirely a Soviet-Stalinist model. True, this model had been envisaged in the Napoleon reforms in France in the beginning of the XIX century, but it never been fulfilled there, in contrast to many other measures, that shaped the characteristic French over-etatist and over-centralized secondary and tertiary education. The real blossoming and fortification of this model had been made in the Stalinist USSR and all our “former” countries. The law-creator should consider the indisputable fact, that the model Specialized Scientific Council + Supreme Attestation Commission, is a Stalinist-Soviet model and it is high time it to be swept out from our academic scene.

Nowadays the procedures for the career development of the academic faculty in Europe and all over the world exhibit an enormous variety of models, and even sometimes the procedures in the different parts of one country differ. For instance in Germany the universities in the different provinces (Länder) have different requirements and exams, different stages of the procedures. In some of the universities before the obtaining of the Doctor’s degree the post-graduate students have to take the difficult rigorosum exam, in others – not. That’s why a generalization of what is going on in Europe and all over the world would sound like that: there is everything and whatever one can imagine, but nowhere there are SSC (Specialized Scientific Councils, appointed by the PM, i.e. political constructions and Supreme Attestation Commissions). There is everything one can imagine, but not anonymous voting of the Doctoral theses and centralization of the academic promotions. Nowhere in the world, except in some of the ‘former’ countries, there is anonymous voting by persons, who are not professionals and experts in the precise topic of the Doctoral theses and the academic discipline of the promotions, as it is in our country. Our SSC and the SAC are a wonderful example of partisan-academic clientelism: the same persons, appointed mainly on political and partisan reasons (whatever the political majority is in the Parliament and in the government), in a centralized structure determine the individual development of the scholars, and moreover in the majority of the cases they lack the specific qualification, necessary for the competent and expert evaluation of the given topic of the theses or the discipline of the promotion

In this connection I should underline, that in the transition period in Bulgaria only the present political majority resisted the temptation to re-arrange the members of the SSCs and SAC, and to appoint the “right persons” in them.

4. All these considerations have united the experts’ community and the majority of the colleagues, who participated in the discussions of the draft-proposal of the new Act, prepared by Georgi Panev, in the autumn of 2000. They have approved not the draft in general, but some of the back-bone-ideas in it. Moreover, the justice demands to stress on the fact that these ideas have found its place in the draft-proposal precisely because of the efforts, exercised in advance for years by the most prominent our professors and dozenten in philosophy and sociology of education. Later on the project has been associated only with the name of Panev, because he had submitted it in the Parliamentary commission for education and culture, which is: 1) misleading the general public, who are the real advocates of the changes; and 2) infavourable for the outcome of this complicated policy and legislative process, because of some previous ambivalent and disputable legislative measures, introduced by Panev in the higher education System.
5. The experts’ community has been united by the conviction that the break through in the Stalinist model of the SSCs and SAC would be successful, only if the principle ad hoc is taken as a general one. The principle ad hoc means, that a certain jury will be determined by a lot for every defense of Doctoral theses and each promotion, among the specialists in this or the closest disciplinary field. This principle is ruling in all EU countries. According to a smaller number of experts, who have worked a year ago on a new draft-proposal for Higher

education Act in the Ministry of education, the exact number of the members of the jury, should be determined in the statute of each university, because this is an essential part of the academic freedom and autonomy. The draft-proposal “Panev” has envisaged 7 members of the jury, which is in conformity with the Greek and Italian models.

6. The experts’ community insists that a General Register of *all* habilitated persons should be made. It is very important all, without any omissions whatsoever to be included in the Register. Otherwise, inescapably there will be suspicions that the promotion processes are guided by political considerations, partisan battles or personal relations. Unfortunately, in the draft-proposal “by Panev” this was not the case and instead of this again a centralizing structure-“hat” was envisaged (State Attestation Agency). According to this draft this SAC should elect the persons (included in a National Experts Staff) that are to be elected as members of the juries. What was expelled from the door, came in through the window. This measure again could allow the political intrusion and the group intrigues. Naturally, the experts’ community discarded this idea in the draft “by Panev”. It is even worse in the drafts by Ganchev-Anastasova-Mestan and by Panayotov. They propose the present situation not to be changed, but to be renamed. Again and again they propose SSCs and centralizing-unifying structure (and again and again it is directly subdued to the PM and the Minister of education). According to these two drafts this structure is called State Commission for academic attestation. The comparison between these two projects shows, that the draft by Panayotov has a certain advantage, in so far the prerogatives of the proposed SCAA are reduced considerably, compared with the present day functions of the SAC and with the envisaged in the drafts by Ganchev-Anastasova-Mestan. In this project the present structures with their functions are just renamed.
7. Also, one of the most significant changes that is needed in the reform of the academic “System”, according to the experts’ community, is the abolishment of the anonymous voting everywhere – in the faculty councils, in the SSCs, and in the SAC. It is also my deepest belief, that if this remains unchanged, the rivers of young Bulgarians, that flow from the country abroad, and inside the country from the education and science to other spheres, will continue to overflow. The younger scholar or scientist-research could accept the lower salary, because (s)he is familiar with the fact that in many economically developed countries the younger academics are (low) middle class. However, as a compensation for this one has many other advantages in one’s life, the main of which is the research and creative character of the profession, that is closer to the free professions, than to the clerk’s work. But, if to the fact of the low incomes is added the total annihilation of the research work, which had been done passionately for years, we don’t have the slightest reason to expect the ceasing of the migration processes. The present procedures with the anonymous voting allow all kinds of forcible impositions of considerations from all kind of extra-academic and extra-scientific character on the work of the (young) scholars. Here also should be added that the mere profile of the persons, who judge in some academic collegia, is more than problematic. The reasons for this claim of mine are presented in details in the research paper “Homo academicus bulgaricus”. In brief they are: the systematic destruction of the intellectual and the artistic capital of the nation in the period 1944-1956; the mechanisms for the cultivating of the new socialist intelligentsia in the 60-ies, the 70-ies and the 80-ies; the obligatory Party-membership for the personal career development not in all, but in many academic disciplines; and many other circumstances and reasons, with which all of us, the Bulgarians are more than familiar. All these have led to a very disputable quality of the highest level of the Bulgarian academic circles, especially in the disciplines with greater degree of ideologization in the previous political regime. Here I will allow myself to share my impression, acquired in the past dozen of years of teaching at the SU. Some of our students, especially the ones, who

have graduated from the elitist foreign language and natural sciences gymnasias, possess greater general and special culture, and more linguistic and computer skills, than some of their professors. It is too naive to assume that these young people will choose the difficult path of the education and science in our country, and that they will allow to be judged and evaluated by those, whom they haven't respected in their students' years. For them anywhere is better than here. That's why the legislator should take into account the consideration that the settlement of this issue predetermines a significant factor in the motivation of the young talented and gifted people to remain here or to leave the country.

It is true, that in some countries there is also anonymity in the voting procedures, but there are other mechanisms that give the necessary perspicuity for the reasons of the given evaluation. In France, in Greece and in Germany the three, or the five, or the seven persons, who vote, vote anonymously. However, in France the voting persons give a short written evaluation. In Germany the two Doctor-Vater-s and the representative of the faculty are obliged to make a detailed oral evaluation, which is recorded word by word in the minutes of the procedure. In Greece, the three persons, who have tutored the writing of the Doctoral paper, and who have followed the work of the applicant step by step, have the decisive word before the voting. What matters is the fact, that even in the cases where there is anonymous voting, the evaluated applicant or the candidate-doctor receives either the written motivation of the voters, or their oral assessments, that are preserved in the minutes. These measures prevent the discrepancies between the written and/or the oral judgements of the voters and their final vote.

In other countries, especially with regards of the full-time employment, the decision is taken personally by the chair of the department or the Dean, or by the rector of the university, or by the chair of trustees. Such is the typical Anglo-Saxon tradition. Still, in these cases, in these type of procedures, it is clear and indisputable whose is this decision, who is responsible for one or another academic choice. It is well known also, that in the classical Humboldtian type university the professor in given academic field solely and individually decides who to become a doctoral student or an assistant. In this "German-mandarin-professor" type of career building, it is more than evident who has taken or another decision.

It is worth mentioning, that as a form of prevention of the "academic" irresponsibility in the former USSR has existed the following disputable unwritten rule: If the anonymous vote of the members of the SSCs is different from the evaluation, recommended by the peer-reviewers, the members of the SSC have been dismissed, and others have been appointed as new members.

In our present legislative regulation there is a single mechanisms for taking the personal responsibility for the development of the (younger) academics. On the contrary, there are infinite possibilities for impersonal, anonymous irresponsibility and for getting rid of the independent and critical persons, who are on the lower step. The chief ones among them are the anonymous voting and the closed procedures for becoming dozent or professor. The minutes of these procedures remain secret, hence everyone from the members of the SSCs can make whatever one wants as an oral statement and influence the voters, because subsequently the applicant is not allowed to read the minutes and to get acquainted with the fact, who has spoken and what has been said. It is clear, what will be the tendencies in the Bulgarian human academic capital, if this situation is preserved. In this respect the draft-proposal "by Panev" envisaged counter-measures as: the open voting; the impossibility to refuse to write a peer-review (which is often done in order to prolong some procedures for years; the removal for one year from the National Experts Register in the cases of an inadequate peer-review (because some peer-reviewers deny the existence of books, published by the applicants); and ultimate removal from the Register in a second similar case.

8. One of the incurable weak-points of the “system” now is the bounding of the academic career development with the places for employment, that are already available in a given research- or educative institution for higher learning. In our higher education “system” there is numerus clausus everywhere and in all levels: the enrollment of the students, the students for the master’s degree, the places for the assistant-professors, dozenten and professors. Provided that this numerus clausus principle is kept, even if all other drastic changes eventually are made (as the appointment of an ad hoc jury instead of the constant SSC and the open voting) the impediments for the development of the academic human resources will remain. The present situation predetermines the personal path of every scholar and scientist to be dependant not on the qualities (s)he possesses, but on “the place”. Therefore a legislative change should aim to provide such institutional circumstances, in which the personal development would be bounded to the personal qualities and achievements. That means:

a) the number of the doctoral students could and should be much greater than the present one; in the current situation the departments are allowed to appoint doctoral students only if somebody from the habilitated staff is supposed to retire within the next years;

b) the number of the assistants, the dozenten, and the professors could be enlarged considerably by the part-time teaching, or the so called private dozentura or private professorship. These mechanisms could create possibilities for the persons, who possess Doctor’s degrees and who are not employed for a full-time job in the higher education institutions (but work elsewhere, say in the business, or the media, the secondary schools, etc.) to deliver periodically specialized courses of lectures, to lead seminars, to work as tutors for some doctoral students, to write peer-reviews.

This idea was considered in the working group of experts, who have worked in the Ministry of education and science a year ago (who almost finished their work on a brand new Higher education act, and whose work was interrupted on demand of certain academic authorities, who insisted that we don’t need any legislative changes whatsoever).

This idea is embodied in the draft-proposal by Alexander Panayotov (Part I, ch. 1, art. 3).

Another idea, which was discussed in the experts’ community with respect with the enlargement of the working possibilities in the academic sphere was inspired by the present practice one and same professor or dozent to teach simultaneously in several universities. Unfortunately, such is the case now. The limited number of habilitated faculty allows them to monopolize all working positions and to be full-time employed in several universities. It is not rear in Bulgaria to meet someone, who is full-time professor in a state university, full-time professor in a private university, and part-time professor in another state university. In this respect as a partner could be attracted the private universities. They have to be persuaded that it is high time to enhance their own academic capacities, to create their own academic collegium and to stop relying on the academic authorities, whom they share with the state universities. The present employment of one and the same person in two or three higher educative institutions prevents the quality of education and keeps the number of the academic working positions very low. If this practice is abolished, the number of the assistant-professors, the dozenten and the professors will be increased at least twice.

9. One of the ideas that united the experts community in the discussions of the legislative initiatives so far, was the radical change for the starting of the promotion procedures and the abolishment of the so called approbation, or the internal defense (in the department). The scholar, regardless whether (s)he is young or middle aged, whether (s)he has written a “small” or a “big” doctorate, whether (s)he is applying for dozentura or professorship, is a full aged person. One of the good proposals in the draft “by Panev” was precisely this – the personal initiative for the beginning of the procedures. A good idea is proposed in the draft by Panayotov as well, where it is envisaged that the peer-reviewers not to be appointed

among the ones, who are full-time employed in the same institution, where the doctoral-student or the applicant is working.

10. Last, but not least, another idea, which should be mentioned as dominating in the experts' community, is the abolition of the double doctorate system. This academic settlement is one of the favourable features that enabled the USA so rapidly to enhance their academic potential and so dynamically to maximize the effect of the research and the teaching. Unfortunately, it was rejected by the academic *notabiles*. Given this enormous resistance, as a compromise solution in the legislative process should be left the degree "Doctor of sciences" (which is dear to many), but it should be completely decentralized: the order, the requirements, and regulations for the obtaining of this degree should be determined in the statutes of the universities.

The brand new legislative initiative – the draft-proposal by Alexander Panayotov - in this context There are several phrases, repeated several times in this "draft-proposal", as for example "the departments with the harmful micro-climate", which make me suppose that the author of this draft is one of the numerous victims of the present system for the development of the academic career in our country. There are also some ideas in his project, designed as a possible preventing measures against the interference, exercised sometimes by the immediate colleagues on one's work and recognition. These are the proposals: a) the peer-reviewers to be appointed from the ones, who are not employed in the same institution as the candidate-doctor or the applicant for associate-professorship or professorship; b) the colleagues-members of the SSC, who come from the same institution as the applicant or the candidate, not to vote in the procedure in the SSC. (As a colleague of mine at the Faculty of philosophy says, "our academia are full with repressed and depressed talented scholars and wonderful persons" and it is a real miracle that so many people make great achievements despite this "system". And how many could succeed, if the system had been different?)

In a more impersonal and analytic tone I want to stress also on the fact, that in the draft-proposal by Panayotov there are several more valuable ideas, which are new in respect of the other two projects:

*the proposal an exam in foreign language knowledge to be introduced for the applicants for full-time academic positions (so far one can become, say, an assistant-professor, associate professor or professor without any foreign language written or oral exam);

*the proposal for the admission the doctorate papers to be written in foreign languages as well (this was possible for a very short time during the governance of Philip Dimitrov, but later on this was abolished, because the majority of the venerable members of the SSCs cannot read foreign languages);

*the idea for the degrees of the evaluation of the doctoral theses with Latin terms

in accordance with the century long university tradition in Europe – rite; cum laude; magna cum laude; summa cum laude;

In final score this project is much better than the draft by Ganchev-Anastasova-Mestan, which sounds extremely good when its motives and intentions are read at the end of it. But in total opposition to these proclaimed aims, the draft by Ganchev-Anastasova-Mestan preserves the present structures and procedures and simply renames them. The draft by Panayotov goes further than the renaming, but not that far, as it is necessary to go, in my conviction. Unfortunately, the draft by Panayotov envisages the structures of the SSCs and the SAC to be kept, and the procedure of the anonymous voting to be preserved. Here and now, with respect to the extremely dangerous processes of the depopulation of the country and the decrease of its scientific potential, we need much more radical legislative

measures.

As a member of the Bulgarian experts' community and the younger reformative academic faculty, I can summarize that the main ideas of the draft "by Panev" receive the greatest support and approval in these two circles. Let me repeat once again, that these ideas are derived and inspired from the dominant European practices (which have many varieties, but no SSCs and SAC) and are closer to the Greek-Italian model. This is important for us, because Greece is the only Balkan country-member both of the EU and NATO, and Bulgaria is an accession country for these two supranational unities. These ideas have been advocated by the best and highly respected experts in sociology and philosophy of education. However, being modest and introvert persons they didn't want to act as public figures and politicians. That's why the draft-proposal was associated with the name of Panev, which had a somewhat negative influence on the process. To a great degree all these ideas have been embodied in the working papers of the group of experts, who prepared in the previous year draft-proposals for new Higher education act and Academic degrees and titles act.

Conclusion

The reforms in the academic sphere and the changing of the mechanisms, which regulate the development of our academics have a supreme importance for the state and the society. They will meet a resistance, comparable to the counter-action against the efforts to reform the judiciary and the strategic privatization deals, taken together. The most influential in the media and the most highly ranked level of the academic guild with great probability will confront all real attempts for a reform and it will accept favourably the more innocent, renaming variants, which preserve the essence of the *status quo ante*.

If the legislator is to introduce a new legislative regulation, which corresponds to the century long European traditions and to the global tendencies in the contemporary world, a strong campaign for the convincing of the public opinion via the media should be undertaken. The public opinion has to be convinced in the enormous social importance of these academic changes.

This will be a very difficult task, but the pledge is great: aren't the people the wealth of Bulgaria?